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Welcome to the Montana Primary Care Office (MTPCO) News

This newsletter is intended to communicate information of interest to CHCs, RHCs, NHSC sites and other partners regarding shortage designation activities, NHSC and J-1 activities and other matters of interest to partners at least quarterly. We welcome your input and recommendations regarding content. Wishing you a wonderful holiday season!

NHSC Loan Repayment and Scholar Information 2009

The 2009 National Health Service Corp **Loan Repayment Program (LRP) Applicant Information Bulletin (AIB)** opened on December 1, 2008 and will close on January 31, 2009. Please note that this close date used to be in March, so this year, loan repayment applicants have a much shorter window of opportunity to apply. The following web site address is where you can access applications materials for the NHSC loan repayment.

<http://nhsc.bhpr.hrsa.gov/applications/lrp/default.htm>

The Division of Applications and Awards, BCRS will have four 2-hour conference calls for applicants, sites, PCO's and others to provide information about the 2009 NHSC LRP AIB and awards process. Each conference call can accommodate 150 people and are scheduled for **January 13, and January 14 from 2:30 -4:30 pm (Eastern Time). Interested parties can participate in one of these conference calls by dialing 1-888-469-0935, and entering pass code: 3407798.**

The 2009 National Health Service Corp
Scholarship Program (SP) Applicant

Information Bulletin (AIB) is expected to be posted in early March 2009 and reportedly will close in early April 2009. This again provides a small window of opportunity. Conference calls to provide information to applicants, PCO's and others about the 2009 NHSC SP AIB and awards process will be held during the application acceptance cycle. The PCO will be sending more information about the Scholarship Program applications and the conference call as it becomes available.

New HRSA On-Line Tools

HRSA has released several new on line tools. A new data base of NHSC opportunities is available at to <http://nhscjobs.hrsa.gov>. This database replaces the existing NHSC opportunities site.

Also – a new site will assist facilities to determine if they have a HPSA score that will enable them to receive Medicare Bonus Payments. The site is <http://datawarehouse.hrsa.gov/geoHPSAAdvisor/>

Shortage Designations

Designations Currently Pending

The following shortage designations are currently being reviewed at the federal level.

Primary Care: Madison, Granite, Judith Basin, Musselshell, Meagher, Still Water, Sweet Grass;

Dental Hill/Blaine, Flathead.

Current designation analysis

The MTPCO is in the process of finishing the Mental Health designations for Montana. Also, the MTPCO is also working on updating multiple facility FQHC designations in an attempt to increase scores for new Primary Care and Dental sites. The Shortage Designation Branch of HRSA has set May 2009 as the deadline for PCO's to submit designations last completed in 2004. We will begin updating the 2005 designations in February 2009.

Surveys Go On-line

In an attempt to systematically collect health professional data to complete shortage designations, the PCO worked with the Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Licensing Bureau to include an on-line survey to the licensing of Dentists for the current cycle. This on-line survey will serve as a pilot for future efforts to gather data which will be used for shortage designation in Montana.

For More Information about Shortage Designations please visit the shortage designation website:

<http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/shortage/>

Conrad J-1 Visa Waiver News

The Conrad J-1 visa waiver was reauthorized in October 2008. For more information about this bill, please check the following web link:

<http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/C?c110:./temp/~c110HhLBAo>

Miscellaneous Happenings

The Montana Healthcare Recruitment Collaborative



This project is designed to help Montana attract and retain more health care professionals into Montana's Shortage Designated areas. To find out more information about the Montana Recruitment Collaborative please contact Lisa Helle Benzel at 406-683-2790 or email her at: Lisa@mtha.org Look for healthcare positions in Montana using the 3rnet <http://www.3rnet.org/>

PCO Contact Information:

As always, if you need additional information about the NHSC, shortage designations or foreign medical graduates, please don't hesitate to contact me at the address or telephone number listed below:



John Schroeck, M.Ed.
Montana Primary Care Office
MT DPHHS

1218 East 6th Avenue
PO Box 202951
Helena, MT 59620
406-444-3934
406-444-2750 Fax

Montana PCO Web Site:

<http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/PHSD/Primary-Care/primary-care-index.shtml>